

**STATE ARCHIVES OF MICHIGAN**  
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**DEPRESSION-ERA AGENCIES**

During the Great Depression a number of state and federal programs were established to help Michiganians cope with the consequences of widespread unemployment and dislocation. Some evidence of this assistance can be found in records at the State Archives, as revealed in the following descriptions.

**Civilian Conservation Corps**

The Emergency Conservation Work Program was created on March 31, 1933. Its purpose was to provide employment for young men in the performance of useful conservation work and public service. The ECW was succeeded on June 28, 1937, by the Civilian Conservation Corps. The CCC, in turn, was discontinued on June 30, 1943.

- RG 66-02      Camp facilities, 1936 (.1 cu. ft.).
- RG 58-14:    General correspondence relating to airfield construction from 1932 to 1940 (1 cu. ft.).
- RG 60-5:     The main CCC files from the Department of Conservation which contain general information on the program (1935-1940), dossiers on completed and uncompleted projects (1938-1941), ideas for proposed projects (1939-1941), and blueprint plans for over 100 construction projects (9 cu. ft.).
- RG 60-12:    Mainly correspondence pertaining to efforts to improve fishing in Michigan from 1933 to 1937 by development of hatcheries, feeding stations, and stream improvements (.7 cu. ft.).
- RG 84-48:    Includes correspondence, planning sheets and newspaper clippings dealing with forestry matters like tree planting, fire fighting, and road construction from 1933 to 1941 (1 cu. ft.).
- RG 61-31:    Letters, reports, and personnel records concerning Genesee County involvement in the CCC from 1935 to 1942 (.1 cu. ft.).
- RG 66-73:    Applications for enrollment and discharges from the Ionia County program, 1936-1941 (1 cu. ft.).
- RG 68-100:   Applications to enter and discharges from the Monroe County program, 1934-1943      (1.1 cu. ft.).
- RG 62-22:    Applications for admission to, and discharges from, the St. Clair County program, 1935-1942 (1.7 cu. ft.).
- RG 66-15:    Applications for admission to, and discharges from, the Lapeer County program, 1933-1942 (.8 cu. ft.).
- RG 78-20:    Enumeration of CCC laborers working in Lake County, 1933-1934 (.2 cu. ft.).

## **Federal Emergency Relief Administration**

The Federal Emergency Relief Administration was formed in May of 1933 under the National Industry Recovery Act, and subsequent legislation extended its operation until June 30, 1943. The purpose of this agency was to work through local offices to distribute relief funds to the needy and provide food, shelter, money, jobs, and training to the destitute.

- RG 35: The Welfare and Relief Study Commission operated from 1936 to 1938 for the purpose of investigating and reporting on the effectiveness of emergency relief activities in Michigan. Included are minutes, data on board members, general correspondence, research and information files, facts on public assistance legislation, and surveys of programs in sixteen selected counties (7 cu. ft.).
- RG 53-5: Consists of contracts between certain township boards and the Attorney General for welfare aid in 1933 (1.2 cu. ft.).
- RG 55-28: The State Emergency Welfare Relief Commission maintained camps in Michigan for the homeless, transient, and unattached single males. This collection contains the records of four such facilities during the period 1934-1952. The documents pertain to Camp Muskegon, Camp Alpena, Camp Gibbs, and the Hagerman Lake Camp, the latter two being near Iron River (3.3 cu. ft.).
- RG 61-31: Contains a sampling of case files for transient and single men in Genesee County for the period 1936-1940 (.2 cu. ft.).
- RG 72-89: Comprised of memoranda, forms, rules, and regulations received by Isabella County from the State Emergency Welfare Relief Commission in 1935-1936 (.1 cu. ft.).
- RG 62-22: Includes audits of the St. Clair County emergency welfare relief commission from 1935 to 1939 (.1 cu. ft.).

## **National Youth Administration**

The National Youth Administration was created on June 26, 1935, as part of the Works Progress Administration. Its purpose was to provide work training for unemployed youth and part-time work for needy students. The NYA was placed in the Federal Security Agency on July 1, 1939, and then transferred to the War Manpower Commission on September 17, 1942. The program was liquidated on July 12, 1943.

- RG 88-63: Contains manuals, reports, publicity, and bulletins pertaining to the Michigan Division of the NYA from 1935 to 1938. The materials relate to vocational guidance and placement, apprentice training, work-study arrangements, and projects undertaken (.4 cu. ft.).
- RG 62-32: Mainly letters pertaining to programs at Northern Michigan College [i.e. University] to employ students (.1 cu. ft.).
- MS 55-19: Photographs of miscellaneous projects (ca. 200 images).

## **Work Projects Administration**

The Emergency Relief Appropriation Act of 1935 authorized the establishment of a Works Progress Administration, an agency which was created by executive order on May 6, 1935. The office operated under this name until July 1, 1939, when it became known as the Work Projects Administration. Liquidation of the program was ordered on December 4, 1942, and the WPA ceased to exist on June 30, 1943.

- RG 81-49: WPA project reports on various Michigan programs, 1935-1943 (2 cu. ft.).
- RG 82-61: Tabulation of WPA Projects in Michigan. Reveals the number of dollars allocated by federal, state, county, township, school districts, and municipal governments for various projects like

- roads, bridges, sidewalks, conservation, recreation, and general services from 1936 to 1939.
- MS 55-19: Photographs of the Manistee County program.
- RG 63-6: Fort Wilkins State Park Historical Project, 1938-1952.

### **State Planning Commission**

The State Planning Commission was created on January 16, 1934, for the purpose of planning, prioritizing, and coordinating public works projects in Michigan. This office collected information, inventoried needs, studied problems, provided information, and rendered advice, mainly with respect to the use and development of the state's resources. The SPC was abolished on July 1, 1947, when the Department of Economic Development was created.

- RG 34: Includes reports on a wide variety of issues, reference materials, technical research manuals, data accumulated by the Rural Resettlement Administration, and suggestions for postwar public works programs, 1930-1946 (3 cu. ft.).
- RG 58-05: Mainly reports on resource development and public improvements, 1943-1952 (1 cu. ft.).